

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 8:56 PM
To: Trumpster2016
Subject: Re: Skowhegan Indian name

Thank you for sharing thoughts, I would happily have a more engaging or thoughtful response if I had a name to address it to.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Trumpster2016 <Trumpster2016@protonmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2019 8:11:53 AM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette
Cc: Brent Colbry; Tina LaPorte; Jonathan Moody; Tracey Foster
Subject: Skowhegan Indian name

Please do not cave to outside pressures to change our Skowhegan Indians name. Do not cave over the empty threats of lawsuits and legal actions. If you do cave, you're going to have a lot of very angry people on your hands. Most of these people can't be bothered to go to a meeting to show support for numerous reasons, but I assure you they exist. Regardless of what you choose to do you're going to upset somebody. Think of it this way, do you want those people that will be angry to be from far out of town or right here in our own district? Do you want those angry people to be those that you work with, live with, shop with and see on a daily basis? You know what needs to be done here, so do it. These outsiders have NO BUSINESS telling us how to run our district.

A real concern should be with Lisa Savage's Blog that constantly attacks a few people by name and slanders them relentlessly, not to mention a local businesses. (<https://went2thebridge.blogspot.com/2019/02/retire-mascot-because-it-costs-too-much.html>) If you take a few minutes of your time and visit the NotYourMascot Maine page or Maulian Dana's page, you will see constant harassment, slander, lies, false accusations, willful misinterpretations and misinformation, pure hatred for Skowhegan and serious racism for all white people. If you can't be bothered to look, I have hundreds of screen shots I would love to send you, but that could seriously jam up your email.

Do you truly think outside pressure should really influence our districts policy? The position of a school board member is an elected position, what your responsibility is is to try to reflect what those that elected you want. If you take 2 minutes to look around, you will see that there are far more people that want to keep the name than those that don't. I am talking about those people within SAD 54, those are the ONLY people you should be concerned with. Sure, there are a small number of local people that have bought in to the lies and deceptions from the opposition, they are a small minority.

Thank you

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 8:54 PM
To: Mindy L. Gilbert
Subject: Re: Saving Indian history!!

Ms. Gilbert,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on this issue. We are elected to be concerned with the wellbeing and education of our district students and I agree with you that we should be doing much more in terms of education regarding the history of and interactions with local Indigenous Peoples. Including how to best honor them the way they wish to be honored. Thank you for reaching out as I believe all perspectives should be heard, and I know this issue is so important to so many of us.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Mindy L. Gilbert <MGilbert@rfgh.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2019 12:52:24 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; gfrench@msda54.org; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette; bcolby@msad54.org
Subject: Saving Indian history!!

Please, I urge you to visit www.naguardians.org and read the information regarding removing all Indian symbolism and education from public schools and the eradication of an entire people and how THAT is hurting our children. Why is learning about Native Americans harmful to our children. They should learn of all horrendous atrocities that has happened in the past in order for them to not be repeated. Educate not eradicate please!!!! We ARE the Skowhegan Indians and always will be!!!!

Mindy Gilbert, CMA AAMA
52 Hanover st.
Skowhegan, ME 04976
207-858-5512

In the same way, the town of Skowhegan is doing the same thing to Native Americans. I am embarrassed to call myself a Maine Citizen when I read that a member of the Skowhegan School Board , is bringing in people who know nothing about Native American culture, to come and “educate” on your so called attempt to “save” your mascot using Native American Gaurdian’s Association Presentation on Sunday , Feb 24, 2019 from 1-3 p.m. The association contains no Native Americans.

Time to wake up and respect all Maine Citizens and acknowledge who should really be represented here.

The event should not be happening at all.

What do you really want to stand for?

I find it odd, that as a Deaf woman I am asking you to Listen to Native American tribes (the real ones).

Carrie Pierce

Metooasl@gmail.com

Carrie Pierce

personal: metooasl@gmail.com

business: bridginghandsasl@gmail.com

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 8:47 PM
To: Janelle Graf
Subject: Re: School Name

Hello Janelle,

I believe we were at SAHS at the same time. I too have a deep connection here, and perhaps our ancestors interacted as well, as I am an 8th generation of my family here. I love that about this area- the fact that so many of us love it so deeply and hold strong to our traditions. That fact alone has made this a trying time, as I take the wellbeing and education of each and every one of our students very seriously. I just wanted to thank you for reaching out because I think it is important for all sides to be heard.

Best,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Janelle Graf <janelle.graf1967@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2019 2:56:22 PM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: School Name

First I would like to say that I am not the best at this sort of thing but hope I can help you see what I feel.

I have spent my entire life in Skowhegan my family settled here in the 1800's as with most of us who have lived here our whole lives we have a deep connection to our town history.

I keep hearing the opposing side say we are trying to steal their name and their Heritage but, I find that to be impossible because the people who are from here own that heritage also. It is who we are. It is what we are. I do not now or have ever believed that we are harming any Native American by using this name that is who we are.

As a community we should be proud to say a horrible tragedy took place in Norridgewock in 1724 and we rose above this to say it wasn't acceptable and that we are Indians and proudly so.

I know the opposing side belittles, degrades, calls disgusting names to people who say they have Native American blood because I have read it on their Facebook wall does that not hurt and mentally harm people are proud to carry their Gene than I don't know what does.

Let me tell you a story. When I was growing up I heard constant stories from my mom that her mom my grandmother had Mic Mac blood and I was so proud not only was I a Skowhegan Indian I was a Mic Mac. I remember watching Western movies on TV and getting so mad and angry at the cowboys, settlers etc.. for their treatment of my family a child's way of thinking but needless to say I would cry and get so upset. As I grew I held on to that love and pride even though I learned more about DNA and I knew that the chances of myself having any Native blood was pretty much nil. I continued to hold it dear to me. My home and my heart were a large part of history. Then when the opposing side started their first attempts to remove the name from my home I started to listen to them to try and understand why, when they started with the bigotry and racist comments calling us Nazi's shame on them, laughing at people who are proud to share their blood no matter how little it may be.

My point is that I feel this town/school is not trying to take away anything we are trying to honor what made this Town our Home. We are passionate about our cause because it is who we are. They can say we are trying to

steal it from them but, the same could be said their side they are trying to steal it from us in which whether they like it or not is a heritage we share together as one not as two separate groups.

I always felt that teams used Native American names for sports because Native Americans had to fight to get ahead they were the underdogs fighting to rise above and so do the sports teams. It is not meant to demean it is meant to say we can rise up and overcome as they have done throughout history.

Janelle Graf

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 8:29 PM
To: Rebecca Chretien
Subject: Re: Skowhegan Indian Name Supporter

Ms Chretien,
Thank you for sharing your thoughts on this issue that is so important to all of us. I take my responsibility to the wellbeing and education of each and every one of our district students very seriously. Thank you for reaching out as I believe all perspectives should be heard.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Rebecca Chretien <rebecca.chretien@maine.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 2:40:03 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette; Brent Colbry
Subject: Skowhegan Indian Name Supporter

Dear MSAD #54 School Board Members and Superintendent Colby;

My name is Rebecca Chretien. I have lived in Skowhegan since 1995. I've always been proud of this town and feel lucky to call it home. My daughters are 13 and 15 and attend the local schools. I am writing today to encourage you to not retake another vote on the Skowhegan Indian name. This matter was voted on and settled in 2015. Myself, my children, my family and friends who are from Skowhegan are proud to call themselves Indians. The word Indian was never meant to be derogatory or hateful in any way. Being a Skowhegan Indian fills you with pride; pride for your schools, pride for the history of our town and proud of the people who live in it. What does it say about our due process if we keep retaking votes until a certain side get the results they want? Whatever the outcome, there will be unhappy people on one side or the other. In this case the unhappy side keeps being allowed to influence our board members, take up valuable time, money and resources of our district and harass members of our community. This just should not be allowed. The voice and opinions of our community should be most important, not the opinions of outsiders who do not live here, pay taxes and only want to take away the name to show they have some type of power over us.

You, the School Board, are supposed to represent the people's best interest & wishes. I think we should also evaluate the cost involved with changing the name with things like: The Gymnasium floor & walls, all of our score boards, our sign at the school's entrance, numerous signs, letter heads & other paper products & our web page for a few off the top of my head. I am sure there are dozens of more things that will cost a great deal of money to change. What if a new name is chosen & the school colors are changed to reflect that? All of the uniforms would need to be changed as well. As I am sure most of you know that Skowhegan has been known as the Skowhegan Indians for about 100 years now, I'm pleading with you to think of the legacy and the history of

this town, what it means to be a Skowhegan Indian. Please keep the history and honor of those who lived here before us a part of our school name and spirit.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Chretien

Skowhegan Resident

Mother of MSAD #54 Students

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 9:40 PM
To: Merle Shields
Subject: Re: Concerned citizen reaches out.

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with the board. I care very deeply about the wellbeing of all of our district students and take my responsibility to them very seriously.

I wholeheartedly agree with you that I wish all the conversations and discussions about the matter could hold more civility and respect from all sides. Again, thank you for sharing your perspective.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Merle Shields <merlgnfshn@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 7:30:12 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette
Subject: Fwd: Concerned citizen reaches out.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Merle Shields <merlgnfshn@aol.com>
Date: February 21, 2019 at 4:55:18 PM EST
To: jenniferpoirier@msad54.org
Subject: Concerned citizen reaches out.

Hi, My name is Merle Shields. I am a graduate of Skowhegan Area High School. I graduated in 1989. I grew up in Mercer and now live in Fairfield. I have been following the issue of using the Indian name. I have always been an advocate of people expressing their differences of opinion in a dignified and respectful manner. We do not have to always agree on issues, but we all should be able to listen to each other and hear each other's point of view. I don't generally get involved or speak out publicly on issues. The reason I am reaching out to you now is because I can no longer stand by and watch the NYM group slander the community that I grew up in. These are the kinds of things that Maulian Dana, leader of the NYM group, posts on her face book page (see attached link). In the article, they use a picture of skowhegan students who are dressed up like Indians. The picture is from the early 70's. The article then basically compares the school students to the present day governor of Virginia who has been linked to the KKK. The governors college nickname was coonman. He is expected to be resigning from his position as governor. The article also speaks of the practice of black face painting, stating that there is no difference between that and how the students faces are painted.

I find this kind of article to be biased, one sided, offensive at best, and more accurately slanderous. There is no basis of comparison between the school students from the seventies and

the present day governor linked to the KKK. First of all the picture of the students is from the 70's. They had to dig up a picture from the past, because the practice of dressing up like this is no longer done. It is no longer done, because the issue has all ready been addressed years ago and changes have all ready been made.

The comparison is also inaccurate, because the KKK is a hate group who feels that they are superior to the blacks. The practice of Black face painting was used to discredit/slander the black people. The skowhegan students, in the photo, and the people in the community are not a hate group. They are not expressing their superiority over the native people. The students did not dress up like Native Americans to discredit or slander them in any way. If you want to call it something, then call it miss guided school spirit due to a lack of education. I can see how this practice was found to be offensive. That is why it was changed years ago and is no longer practiced.

I see the words racist and racism used many times by members of the NYM group, when talking about the situation at the skowhegan area high school and the use of the Indian name. Racist and racism, by definition is one group of people feeling/expressing their superiority over another group of people. Much like the KKK felt towards the black people or hitler's feelings towards the Jews. I have even seen one NYM supporter reference hitler when talking about educating the skowhegan community about the Native Americans of the region.

If the skowhegan community was truly racist or practiced racism, then they would not be fighting to keep the Indian name. They would be working to eliminate any and all images and references of the native peoples of the region. Virtually erasing them from existence.

If you find the use of the Indian name to be offensive, then fine. Say you are offended. We all have a right to our opinion, but none of us have a right to not be offended. It is a matter of perspective. Not all Native Americans find the use of the Indian name offensive. Some actually do feel honored by it. Some have come forward and expressed this. Some wish to remain anonymous, fearing backlash from their families and members of the native community. We can all have a difference of opinion and still remain respectful, stating facts while not referencing fiction or piecing together untruths.

<https://went2thebridge.blogspot.com/2019/02/outrage-over-blackface-is-enough-to.html?m=1>

Sent from my iPhone

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 9:25 PM
To: Michelle Bernard
Subject: Re: The School Mascot/ Non-Mascot Issue

Hello, Mrs. Bernard,

We typically have an open comment session at our board meetings for the public to address concerns. At our last board meeting comments on the mascot issue were not allowed as we had just had the open forum for comment. I'm not certain about the limitations of the comment period for our upcoming meeting as that is decided by our board chair, Dixie Ring.

Personally, I would welcome your written thoughts if you would like to share them. I too believe all sides should be heard.

Thank you and your family for your service and sacrifice.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Michelle Bernard <chexcentaur@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 8:48:03 AM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette
Cc: Brent Colbry; Tina LaPorte; Jonathan Moody; Tracey Foster
Subject: The School Mascot/ Non-Mascot Issue

Good Morning,

My name is Michelle (Lavallee) Bernard, and I saw a segment this morning on WVII ABC 7, the continuing story of the Skowhegan mascot/non-mascot issue. Unlike the group NAGA, I grew up in Maine, and at one point in time I was the school mascot for the now retired Sanford R***kins. It gives me a unique perspective on the issue, as I'm now a mother. As an military daughter and wife, and adjunct philosophy professor, I would love the opportunity to come speak to the school board, teachers, parents, students, etc. to be able to share my experiences as the mascot and a parent, and to show that all sides of the discussion should be heard.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this matter, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Michelle Bernard

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 9:29 PM
To: Ann Dorney
Subject: Re: mascot

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and expertise with the board. I care a great deal about this issue and the wellbeing of all our students as well. I appreciate your input and voice on the matter.
Sincerely, Sarah Bunker

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From: Ann Dorney <anndorney@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 24, 2019 11:06:26 AM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: mascot

As a former State Representative (from Norridgewock) and doctor in Skowhegan for the last 36 years, I am one of the experts in Somerset County on ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and how trauma affects your health. I am sure as a school board member, you are aware of ACEs and Resiliency (how people recover from trauma including ACEs) and their effect on schools and learning. What you might not know is that research suggests that not only the original 10 ACEs contribute to mental and physical health outcomes, but 3 additional ACEs have been determined, including experiencing bullying and experiencing racism (as well as poverty as the 3rd). We also know that native American children including those in Somerset County) do experience racism and studies show that having native American mascots contribute to this.

I am also concerned about legal fees that SAD 54 is going to have to continue to spend to continue to justify its keeping of the Indian mascot. I know that there is a meeting today to encourage you to keep the mascot, but I hope that you will actually consider retiring it. We can find another image to stand behind - I personally like the idea of Skowhegan Pride (?maybe mascot be male and female lions) as one letter to the editor recently suggested. It would be helpful for everyone to unanimously vote to retire it, so that we can move on.

Thanks for your consideration.

Ann Dorney

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 4:15 PM
To: Dorko, Allison
Subject: Re: Letter attached

Dr. Dorko,
I have received and read this letter. Thank you for your continued input and dedication to the interests and wellbeing of our district students.
Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Dorko, Allison <allison.j.dorko@okstate.edu>
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 4:01:08 PM
To: Brent Colbry; Jonathan Moody; Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette
Subject: Letter attached

Dear MSAD 54 School Board,

Please find attached a new letter as you consider your next steps.

I would appreciate a confirmation that you have received this letter. I have attached a signed PDF, and have copied the text below.

Best,
Allison

February 25, 2019

Dear MSAD 54 School Board,

This is a letter to express concern regarding the financial and operational ramifications of the board's failure, as of yet, to change the name/symbol to something noncontroversial. I urge the board to invest money now to change the name/symbol so as to avoid future sums that could be much greater. There is an easy "out" here that allows the board to skirt the disagreement over whether the name honors anyone or whether it is racist, et cetera. The board can justify changing the name/symbol as the best financial and operational move. (Another "out" is to appeal to policy; see my previous letters).

The school name/symbol issue will continue to surface until it changes. As such, it will continue to cost the board time and money. As evidence that this issue is not going away,

1. In the 1990s, Dennis Culley asked the board to cease and desist the use of the mascot.
2. In 2000, the board resolved to stop having a person run around in a costume at sporting events.
3. In 2015, the board held an open forum, then voted and retained the name/symbol.

4. In 2018/2019, the issue has arisen again.

The repeated requests that the board change the name/symbol take an immense amount of school board time, which affects the time the board has for other important operations (e.g., the budget). Had the board changed the name/symbol in 2015, it would not be spending time and money on the issue now. Moreover, the lawyers at the open forum suggested it would be very possible for the board to face a lawsuit if it retains the name/symbol. That would cost an immense amount of money. Money spent on continuously dealing with this issue is money that is NOT going to academics, sports, facilities, and extracurriculars. **It is unfair to the students, faculty, and staff of the district to risk a possible lawsuit and its associated costs.**

The board could invest some money now to change the circles on the school sign, the scoreboards, and whatever else needs to be changed, and thereby save a lot of money in the future. If this had been done in 2015, the board would currently be sending fewer checks to DrummondWoodsum. Or, the board could fail to change the name/symbol, and get ready to do the last few months over again, likely with higher price tags on money and time.

Sincerely,

Allison Dorko, PhD

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2019 8:34 PM
To: Hope
Subject: Re: Convicted Child Molester Archie Fool Bear represents NAGA

Hi Hope,
Yes, I read that too. No problem, I just wanted to be clear I wasnt missing a detail or some other article.
Thanks.
Sarah

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From: Hope <hopesavage@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2019 7:41:05 PM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: Re: Convicted Child Molester Archie Fool Bear represents NAGA

Hi Sarah
In the court filing document I attached, the man who said Robert Fool Bear and another man sexually molested him as a child (for which they were both convicted) also accuses Robert's brother, Archie Fool Bear, and the other man convicted at that trial of being known child molesters while they worked an on the police force together. That testimony was excluded initially but, was reinstated into the record upon appeal.

I apologize for not being clearer in my initial email. Thank you for the due diligence.

Hope

Sent from my iPad

On Feb 20, 2019, at 2:15 PM, Sarah Bunker <sarahbunker@msad54.org> wrote:

Hello Hope,
From the articles you sent, it looks like Archie Fool Bear is the brother of the convicted child molester, Robert Fool Bear?(I did read the court document that includes where there is an accusation made of Archie as well) but I didnt see anything in what you sent regarding Archie Fool Bear being convicted of child molestation- am I missing something?
Sarah Bunker

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From: Hope <hopesavage@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2019 4:49:59 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette

Cc: Brent Colbry; Tina LaPorte; Jonathan Moody; Tracey Foster
Subject: Convicted Child Molester Archie Fool Bear represents NAGA

Dear SAD board and Supervisors,

Archie Fool Bear is known to have represented NAGA at events such as the upcoming event to which Jennifer Poirier has invited the board, but excluded the public.

Thought you might want to look at this court document which speaks to upholding evidence submitted in a court that found him guilty of child molestation and sentenced him to 30 years in prison.

This is the quality of person recruited by NAGA to influence your decisions on this local matter.

I again urge the board to steer clear of this not only because the general public is not welcome to attend an event designed to influence your decision but to also make your decisions outside of the influence of this very questionable organization.

Respectfully
Hope Savage
Skowhegan

<http://www.ndcourts.gov/Court/Briefs/20120412.atb.htm>

https://bismarcktribune.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/fool-bear-sentenced-to-years-in-prison/article_08d41aa5-6389-5655-849c-95e4f943ccb.html

Evidence this person represents NAGA:

<https://www.cedarcityutah.com/news/archive/2019/02/04/jmr-seeing-red-will-school-board-vote-to-keep-cedar-highs-mascot-or-change-it/#.XG3HqIafA>

Sent from my iPad

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2019 8:41 PM
To: Mary Cayford
Subject: Re: Mascot letter

No problem, thank you! I'm on the board, so I'll get a copy. Thanks.
Sarah

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From: Mary Cayford <mcayford@gwi.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2019 11:08:48 AM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: Re: Mascot letter

Hi Sarah,

If you are on the S. A D. #54 school board, Jane Arthur said that Tina will give you a copy before or for Thursday's meeting. If not, I will mail or deliver a copy to you myself. Unfortunately, I don't know how to change the format for you.

Thanks,
Mary Cayford

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2019 9:02 AM
To: mcayford@gwi.net ; jane.arthur@live.com
Subject: Mascot letter

Hello,
I'm not sure if others are having similar problems reading your letter, but I'm unable to open the attachment in the format that it is in, is there a way you could resend it in another format? Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.
Sarah Bunker

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Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2019 12:18 AM
To: Brent Colbry; Jonathan Moody
Subject: Mascot Requests- Data
Attachments: Mascot Request Data-srb.xls

Hi, I hope the conference is going well!

I process better visually so I did this for myself, and it's not fancy but I thought I'd pass it along in case it's useful or even just interesting to you. Realizing most people tend to hear what they already believe better than what they don't (myself included) I really wanted a more objective way to look at the big picture of the public comments and requests.

So I went through all the emails the board has received since October and watched the video of the forum to note names (so the names are phonetically spelled) and occupations are only listed if they specified in their letter or verbal request). I think there are some missing speakers from both sides from the December board meeting. For example, I only found the names of a few of the students from the Penobscot Youth Council who spoke up at the December meeting, so they are underrepresented on the chart. Religious leaders are also underrepresented in the chart because I only included those who signed or personally spoke, not the pages of 100+ names also included). Hope you find it as interesting as I did!

On another note, while re-watching the video of the forum, I was so incredibly impressed by our current students who spoke up, there were 8 by my count, (7 for change, 1 against) all girls. This struck me, especially regarding the survey results that were presented at the last EPPC meeting about our students (especially girls) not feeling like they matter. I'm wondering if it would be appropriate for the board to recognize those 8 students in some way- to let them know that their voices and their courage matters. If you think it would be appropriate, I do have a few ideas.

Have a good weekend! I hope you don't have to travel in the snow.

Best,
Sarah

From: Sarah B <[srbbunker@yahoo.com](mailto:srbunker@yahoo.com)>
Sent: Thursday, January 17, 2019 11:05:40 PM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: mascot requests data

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Tuesday, January 15, 2019 8:26 PM
To: Karin Leuthy
Subject: Re: Insight from Sanford regarding Skowhegan's mascot

Thank you for reaching out with all this information, I've found it to be helpful and useful and I appreciate the time and effort you have put into it.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Karin Leuthy <karinleuthy@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 12, 2019 4:03:20 PM
To: Amy Rouse; Brent Colbry; Brandy Morgan; Christy Johnson; Darcy Surette; Derek Ellis; Desiree Libby; Dixie Ring; Goff French; Haley Fleming; Harold Bigelow; Heidi Chartrand; Jean Franklin; Jeannie Conley; Jennifer Poirier; Karen Smith; Lynda Quinn; Mark Bedard; maryellencharles; Peggy Lovejoy; Richard Irwin; Sarah Bunker; Theresa Howard; Todd Smith
Subject: Insight from Sanford regarding Skowhegan's mascot

Dear Superintendent Colbry and members of the MSAD 54 School Board,

Thank you for hosting the forum on the school mascot issue last week, and for allowing all those concerned to be heard. I was impressed by the turn-out, especially by local residents and SAHS students.

As I mentioned in my remarks at the forum, I am the founder of Suit Up Maine, a statewide, all-volunteer constituent action network with a mission to create a more informed and engaged electorate in Maine. Our 5,500 members come from all 16 counties, including Somerset, and many have been following the mascot issue in Skowhegan closely. Although I live in Midcoast, I do spend every summer in Skowhegan, as the dutiful support crew for a livestock exhibitor at the Skowhegan Fair (she also presented remarks at your forum as a founder of the Maine Teen Advocacy Coalition).

I recently reached out to superintendents and principals of Maine schools that have retired their Indian-themed mascots, thinking that their insight could be helpful to you as you navigate this issue. While the forum's timing following winter break made it harder to receive responses, I did hear back from the superintendent and principal at Sanford as well as the principal at Old Town.

The Superintendent of Sanford Schools shared their transition timeline, internal guidelines for selecting a new mascot, and a compilation of all the newspaper clippings about their process, which I've attached here. Sanford Principal Matt Petermann also told me about how a special committee was formed to oversee the process, which included community members, school committee members, students, and faculty. The committee was charged with researching the issue, gathering input from various stakeholders, creating a list of mascot alternatives, and getting the word out about change. While it took some time to come to the decision to change the mascot, once made it took about a month to switch over. They phased out their athletic gear gradually, and did not need to spend additional funds on that.

I asked Sanford Principal Matt Petermann "What were the greatest challenges to your transition and how did you overcome them?" He said, "The alumni did not like the change, nor did many community members. We had to educate people. You will never make everyone happy during this process." I also asked him what parts of their transition process went well and what they would have done differently. Principal Petermann said, "Realistically, we probably should have done it sooner and done more in the lines of educating people on the insensitive nature of the old mascot."

Old Town Principal Scott Gordon told me, "The most important thing to focus on is your kids and the understanding that they need a mascot that they can rally around and be proud of without being in the middle of a feud which is likely adult-centered. In addition, keep in mind – this too will pass. It is a big issue in your community right now, but after a while things will settle and you will move. We have, and we now have kids who have only known us as Coyotes for their entire lifetime. You will get there."

I encourage all of you to continue to reach out to your counterparts in these districts that have gone through this process and come out stronger on the other side. I hope you will do so before the next board meeting on the 24th. I plan to be there, and hope to hear more then about what all of you have learned since the last board meeting, and how you will move forward to help educate the Skowhegan area community about why such a change is necessary and how everyone can work together to make the transition a positive experience.

Suit Up Maine has also created [a guide](#) for discussing this issue. We hope you find it helpful.

All the best,

Karin Leuthy

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Tuesday, January 15, 2019 10:10 AM
To: NAGA Guardians
Subject: Re: Letter to Skowhegan Board Members

Yes, I believe so. Thank you.
Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: NAGA Guardians <nagaguardians@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 14, 2019 10:02:58 PM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: Re: Letter to Skowhegan Board Members

My name is Eunice Davidson, if you viewed our website you'll see my bio on there. Did I answer your question?

On Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 8:52 PM Sarah Bunker <sarahbunker@msad54.org> wrote:
Thank you for your reply! May I have your name please?
Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: NAGA Guardians <nagaguardians@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 14, 2019 6:11:20 PM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: Re: Letter to Skowhegan Board Members

Dear Sarah,

In response to the questions you raised here is our reply. First of all, it is important to point out the native themed schools like yours typically date back many decades. Only in more recent years has there been any wide spread resistance to the names and images from Native Americans. In fact, these names and images have historically been supported by Indian people and leaders. For instance, an Indian named Lone Star Dietz suggested that the then NFL Washington Redskins change their name to the Redskins. Former Blackfoot tribal chairman and one-time president of NCAI, Walter "Blackie" Wetzel is responsible for the current Washington Redskins logo. In years since NCAI leadership has been infiltrated with radical elements supportive of the not your mascot movement. Concerning representatives of local tribes calling for the removal of your Indians name and logo, this clearly illustrates the disconnect between a handful in tribal leadership who involve themselves in the politics of this issue versus the membership who are not embroiled in the politics and who

overwhelmingly support the continued respectful use of our names and images. We point you back to the only vote by a tribe on this issue in which against the will of tribal leadership, the members of the Spirit Lake Tribe forced a vote that garnished 67% support for keeping the Fighting Sioux name and symbol. The Standing Rock tribal leaders would not even allow a vote and actually passed a Resolution 209-08 in 2008 denying tribal members the ability to even talk about the name and image. We call this disconnect between tribal leadership and membership the powerful versus the people. When rank and file Indian people are asked their opinion on this issue, you see for yourself the survey data showing 80-90% support. This is a radical political movement advanced by a relatively small number of Indian tribal leaders and Indian activists joining forces with their non-Native far leftist allies mostly in academia for the purpose of exacting revenge upon the white race by trying to intimidate Native themed schools to drop their native identities. It is a damaging, racist hate America movement that does nothing but create division and enormous negative fallout to the communities who entertain their vitriol. The majority of Indian people are patriotic Americans who see the respectful use of our names and images as one of the few ways to remain visible and relevant in American society. Do not let this small group of vengeance driven radicals take away your proud tradition.

NAGA

On Mon, Jan 14, 2019 at 10:32 AM Sarah Bunker <sarahbunker@msad54.org> wrote:
Hello. Thank you so much for taking the time to reach out to express your perspective and share your experience regarding this very delicate issue for my community.

I have a few questions, as I am trying to educate myself on this matter.
Firstly, it seems your organization's stance on this subject is drastically different than the opinion put out through the National Congress of American Indians. I am hoping you can talk to me a bit about that difference?

Second, it seems like in the Fighting Sioux situation (which I know very little about), that you very much encouraged the school to listen to the local tribes (yours) regarding the mascot/name being offensive versus honoring. With our situation being a little different in that our school's nickname (Indians) is not in reference to a specific tribe that we could seek permission to use as a Namesake Exception situation- also, in our case it is the representatives of the local tribes who are the very ones asking us to stop using the name and logo (this was not initiated by a current student claiming harm as stated in your letter). That being said, how should I, as a board member, weigh the differences in opinion between organizations such as NAGA, versus the NCAI, and versus the local tribal requests?

I greatly appreciate your time and any further input you may have.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: NAGA Guardians <nagaguardians@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 14, 2019 10:27:24 AM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette

Cc: Tony Henson; AndreUSCG; William Brotherton; Mark Yellowhorse; Mark OneWolf
Subject: Letter to Skowhegan Board Members

Dear Board Members, Native American Guardian's Association ask your board to read a letter from our organization that is attached, and attachments to verify our stance. If you have any questions please reply to our email and we will get back to you as soon as possible. If you would visit our website, there is much information in there also.

Thank you,
Eunice Davidson

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Friday, January 11, 2019 9:49 AM
To: April Fournier
Subject: Re: #WeAreNotAMascot

April,
Thank you for that clarification, it is helpful.
Sincerely,
Sarah
207-313-3876

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From: April Fournier <april.fournier@maine.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 11, 2019 9:22:34 AM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: Re: #WeAreNotAMascot

Hi Sarah, thank you for the response. I am referencing this drawing (and all drawings really) when talking about the mascot. As long as the mascot is "the Indian" then whether it is this logo or others they fall in the same category. It is not representative of the community, it is not respectful or honoring indigenous people to continue to carry a logo that they had no input or interest in supporting. Especially when it has been requested to be changed. I appreciate that you are asking questions and genuinely interested in dialogue.

Thank you!

April

On Fri, Jan 11, 2019 at 9:04 AM Sarah Bunker <sarahbunker@msad54.org> wrote:

Hello!

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on this subject. I care very deeply about this issue. I'm attaching the official school logo and hoping that you will confirm for me that you are referencing this logo in your letter? I know there are other unofficial "logos" floating around the internet and I just want to be sure that you are referencing our official logo when you are talking about caricatures. Thank you and I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bunker

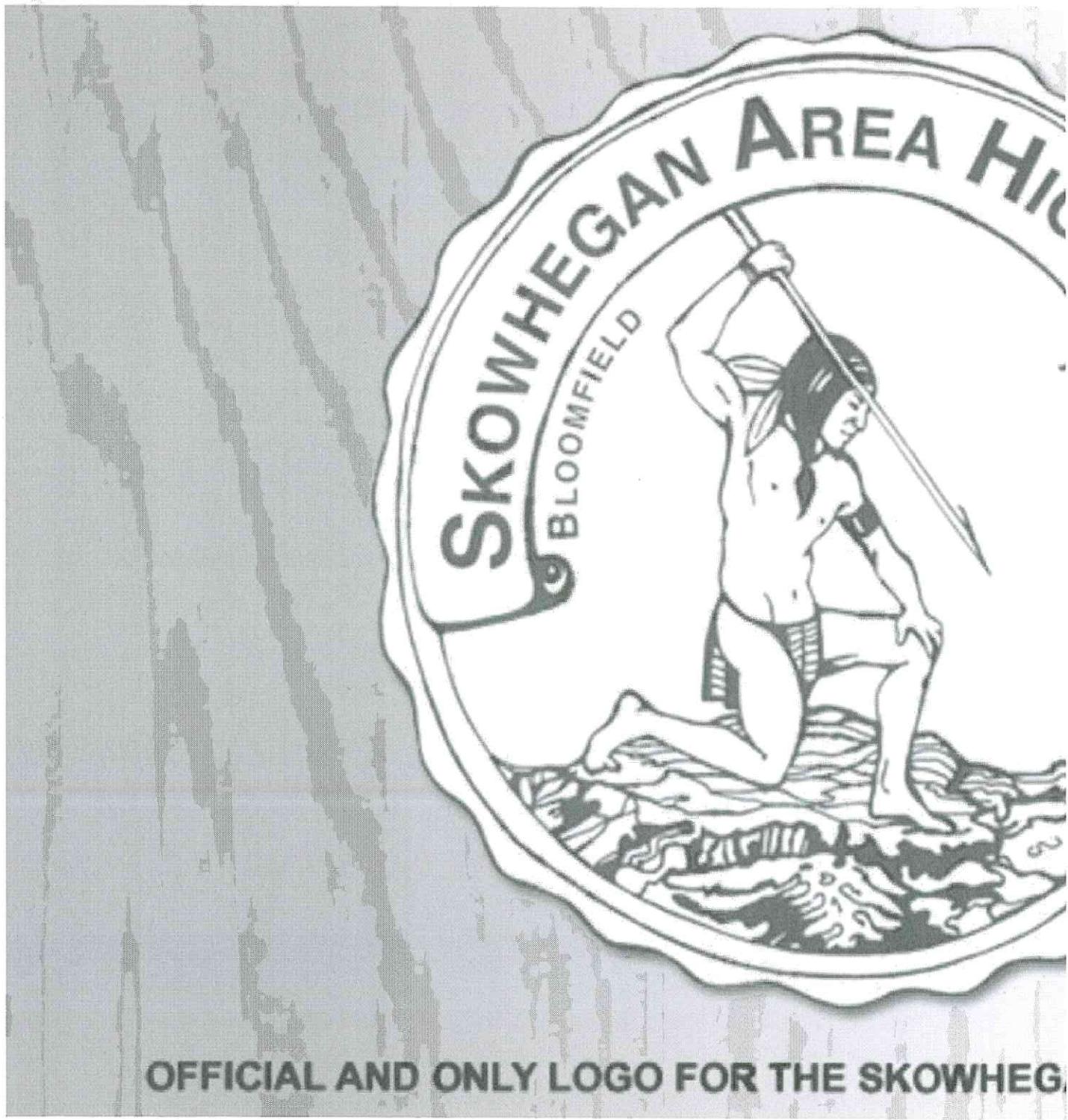
skowhegan area high school.logo

ALL

IMAGES

MAPS

NEWS



OFFICIAL AND ONLY LOGO FOR THE SKOWHEGAN AREA HIGH SCHOOL

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From: April Fournier <april.fournier@maine.edu>

Sent: Friday, January 11, 2019 7:59:49 AM

To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette

Cc: Brent Colbry

Subject: Fwd: #WeAreNotAMascot

Superintendent and Board

My name is April Fournier, I am a member of the Dine' Nation, part of the Honághááhnii clan and raised in both the southwest and here in Maine. I'm currently a resident in Portland. I am a mother of 4 children, all students in Portland schools and all aware of the challenges Indigenous people face in our state and nationally. I am an educator and I am a community activist. I am also one of the co-founders of the first women's all-Indigenous roller derby team to compete in a World Cup event. We represented over 20 tribal nations across 3 different continents at the World Cup in Manchester UK in 2018. We developed a logo, which I have attached and I find relevant to the mascot discussion. The woman warrior depicted in our Team Indigenous logo was developed by our team of Indigenous women to represent the community that we developed. This is not a mascot. This is not a caricature. This was a representation born from centuries of strength, resilience and culture. We are a proud community and this is our representation.

The Skowhegan mascot is a caricature. It was not born of an Indigenous community, it does not represent who Skowhegan is. What is even more perplexing is that many Indigenous communities have expressed concern over the mascot image and requested its removal. Yet the board continues to dig in their heels at making a change. Skowhegan is proud. That is admirable. But as we collaborated within our community to develop an image that embodied the spirit of our group, I would ask Skowhegan to collaborate within your community to find your identity and develop a more appropriate representation of who you are. Allow your students and families have a voice in creating something to be truly proud of.

The time for Indigenous mascots is over. We are a people. We are real and living proof of the resilience of generations all around the world. We are NOT a mascot.

Thank you for your time

Respectfully,

April Fournier

--

April Fournier

april.fournier@maine.edu

207-332-6764

--
April Fournier

april.fournier@maine.edu

207-332-6764

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2019 7:31 PM
To: cpb620@aol.com
Subject: Re: Letter regarding Indian symbol and use

Thank you for taking the time to write. I received and read your letter and I appreciate you speaking up for the benefit of all students regarding this matter, which I also care deeply about.

Respectfully,
Sarah Bunker

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From: cpb620@aol.com <cpb620@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2019 5:41:21 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Jean Franklin; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette; Brent Colbry; Tina LaPorte; Jonathan Moody
Subject: Letter regarding Indian symbol and use

I would greatly appreciate a response that this was received and read.

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, January 9, 2019 9:34 AM
To: Mike Herrick
Subject: Re: Mascot

Hello.

Thank you for adding your perspective on this issue, it's one I have been wondering about; whether the divisive nature of the mascot issue interferes with team unity. I'm glad to hear voices of student-athletes and coaches and how this affects them/you. Thank you also for all the work you do with students and our community.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Mike Herrick
Sent: Wednesday, January 9, 2019 8:23:38 AM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Mark Bedard; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Christy Johnson; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette
Cc: Brent Colbry; Jonathan Moody
Subject: Mascot

I was unable to attend last night's forum. Please take the words below into consideration when deciding what steps will be made moving forward.

I am writing in support of changing the "Indian" mascot from the Skowhegan schools. My intent in writing this letter is to share a different perspective from a unique viewpoint as a coach in the district, not necessarily to share whether or not I feel the name "Indian" is right or wrong.

In Webster's dictionary, the word mascot is defined as "a person, animal, or object adopted by a group as a symbolic figure especially to bring them good luck". The word that stands out to me in this definition is "symbolic". A mascot is used as a symbol of a particular group, whether it be a sports team or a group of people. The idea of a mascot is to bring a group together, to bring luck, to celebrate and embrace the group's identity while giving them purpose and direction.

One of the biggest goals that I have as a coach is to unite our team. This can sometimes be challenging, but gives me great pride as it is so important. Through experience I have found that one of the most effective ways to unite a team is to give them an identity that they can fully embrace. In my experiences coaching in Skowhegan, I haven't felt it right to embrace the Indian mascot as a way to unite our team. This choice has not come from how I feel personally. It comes from the fact that many people are so passionate and emotional about it one way or the other. So much of coaching is finding a connection with people, building trust and motivating a group to work together with the same goals in mind. To me, using the word "Indian" as our identity works more towards dividing a team rather than uniting it. The Indian mascot brings joy and happiness to some while hurting and offending others. It is difficult for me to understand and support keeping a mascot that is offensive and uncomfortable to so many people.

I have never included the word “Indians” on team apparel that we have created for the sports teams that I have coached. I do not include the word “Indians” in team huddles as I know that it is controversial to many people. As a coach, I don’t feel that it’s right or even productive to stir up these emotions. I feel this way because there have been times that I have felt uncomfortable and conflicted while coaching teams with the Indian as a mascot.

I believe that now is the time to adopt a new mascot. We have a great opportunity in front of us to create a symbol and identity that our entire community can truly embrace and celebrate.

Respectfully,

Mike Herrick
MSAD #54 Physical Education
Girls Varsity Soccer
7th Grade Boys Basketball

Mike Herrick
Skowhegan Area Middle School
Physical Education
Skowhegan Girls Varsity Soccer

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Wednesday, January 9, 2019 1:25 AM
To: kbdorko@beeline-online.net
Subject: Re: mascot/nickname

Hello,

I just wanted to take a moment to let you know I appreciated your letter, thoughts, and the work you do for students. Thank you for adding your voice to this issue that is so important to all of us.

Respectfully,
Sarah Bunker

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From: kbdorko@beeline-online.net <kbdorko@beeline-online.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 2:35:21 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette; Brent Colbry; Jonathan Moody
Subject: mascot/nickname

Please see the attached letter regarding the use of Native American or Indians as school mascots.

Thank you,

Kathy Dorko

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 5:36 PM
To: Arlene Jurewicz Leighton
Subject: Re: Indian Mascot Forum

Thank you for your letter and for speaking up on this matter that you care about. I just wanted to let you know it was received and to assure you that I will read it and the many other letters we've received in the past few hours after the forum. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Arlene Jurewicz Leighton <arlene.jurewiczleighton@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 4:24:42 PM
To: Sarah Bunker
Subject: Indian Mascot Forum

Due to hazardous traveling conditions forecasted tonight I will not be attending your Indian Mascot Forum. Thank you, Arlene J Leighton

Here is my letter:

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Sunday, January 6, 2019 4:55 PM
To: Myke Johnson
Subject: Re: A Letter from Maine Faith Leaders Re: the issue of the Indian name

Rev. Dr. Myke Johnson,

Thank you for taking the time (collectively) to speak out on this issue and to amplify the request made by Ambassador Dana and other Wabanaki members. I appreciate your thoughtful words and prayers regarding this difficult time for our community, and I applaud the unity of so many voices of varied faiths on this matter. I hope that our divided community is also able to find common ground moving forward. Thank you for the wonderful example of collective advocacy.

Sincerely,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Myke Johnson <mykejohnson@maine.rr.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 6, 2019 3:40:46 PM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette
Cc: Brent Colbry; Tina LaPorte
Subject: A Letter from Maine Faith Leaders Re: the issue of the Indian name

Dear Chair Ring, Vice-Chair Charles, Superintendent Colbry, and Members of the SAD 54 School Board:

This week, you have called a special board meeting to allow the public to share their thoughts on the issue of the Indian name at Skowhegan Area Schools. Thank you for your offer to listen to all of those who wish to share their thoughts.

Through the attached letter, faith leaders in the state of Maine wish to add our voices to support a change to the use of the "Indian" name and logo.

I thank you in advance for reading our letter, and hearing our concerns.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Dr. Myke Johnson
Decolonizing Faith Project

Tina LaPorte

From: Sarah Bunker
Sent: Thursday, January 3, 2019 10:36 AM
To: Margaux Files
Subject: Re: Please read re: mascot

Hello,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter and for the work you do for all students. As you may know, there will be an open forum on the subject January 8th at 6pm in the Middle School gym. To speak you'll need to sign up in the hour before with our chairperson, Dixie Ring, at the Middle School cafeteria.

Your perspective as an educator and counselor along with your strong ties to the community is a particularly powerful one in calling for empathy to honor the requests of the local Native American tribes. I sincerely hope it is heard.

Respectfully,
Sarah Bunker

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From: Margaux Files <margaux.files@msad59.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 3, 2019 9:55:47 AM
To: Dixie Ring; maryellencharles; Mark Bedard; Harold Bigelow; Sarah Bunker; Heidi Chartrand; Jeannie Conley; Derek Ellis; Haley Fleming; Jean Franklin; Goff French; Theresa Howard; Richard Irwin; Christy Johnson; Desiree Libby; Peggy Lovejoy; Brandy Morgan; Jennifer Poirier; Lynda Quinn; Amy Rouse; Karen Smith; Todd Smith; Darcy Surette; Brent Colbry; Jonathan Moody
Subject: Please read re: mascot

January 2, 2019

Dear MSAD#54 School Board Members:

As a Skowhegan resident, parent, school counselor, and civil rights team advisor, I advocate that we honor the request from tribal representatives and retire the "indian" mascot. It is the right thing to do; it is the respectful thing to do.

I have lived in the Skowhegan area most of my life. I remember, as a high school student in the 1990's, attending various sporting events and seeing people dressed as "indians", holding handmade tomahawks, and waving/chatting at events. As an adolescent, I really didn't give this much thought, but as an adult I think about how the "indian" mascot quickly made a mockery and stereotype of another race. Empathy matters. How might I feel if the mascot was of my heritage? Making a mockery of who I am, who my family is, and what my heritage is? The definition of heritage is "something inherited at birth, such as personal characteristics, status, and possessions". I am not native American, therefore I have no right to assume how they feel or to say "the indian" is part of my heritage, because it is not.

I work primarily with elementary students, pre-k through 4th grade. Daily, I advocate for the safety and well-being of local youth. Daily, I and others seek to create the foundation upon which EVERYONE feels welcome and safe, regardless of gender, national origin, race/skin color, and family structure. We have many lessons, conversations, and teachings about being compassionate, respectful, responsible, empathetic, and kind. These values and rights matter to YOU, ME and EVERYONE. May you take a moment and really listen

to the tribal representatives, as they do not feel honored. As a community, let us honor them by retiring the "indian" mascot.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Margaux Belliveau-Files

--

Margaux Files
School Counselor
Civil Rights Team Advisor
Madison Elementary School
Phone: (207) 696-4607

We are living art, created to hang on, stand up, forbear, continue and encourage others.
~Maya Angelou